

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM

NR Eligible: yes ☒ no ☐

Property Name: Preston Gardens Inventory Number: B-2237  
Address: 200-500 blocks St. Paul Place; within medians of northbound and southbound St. Paul St. between Lexington and Centre Sts. Historic district: yes ☒ no ☐  
City: Baltimore Zip Code: 21202 County: Baltimore City  
USGS Quadrangle(s): Baltimore East  
Property Owner: Mayor and City Council of Baltimore Tax Account ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Tax Map Number: 4  
Project: Red Line Corridor Transit Study Agency: Mass Transit Administration  
Agency Prepared By: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Preparer's Name: Katherine Larson Farnham Date Prepared: 9/27/2007  
4/27/2011, REVISED  
Documentation is presented in Baltimore Alliance for Great Urban Parks, Discovering Baltimore's Parks (Third Ed. 2007):26; M.E. Hayward and F. Shivers, The Architecture of Baltimore (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, Baltimore: 2004).  
Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation X Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_ Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_  
Criteria: X A    B X C    D Considerations:    A    B    C    D    E    F    G  
*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property*  
Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_  
Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible:    yes    no    Listed:    yes    no     
Site visit by MHT Staff    yes    no X Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

Preston Gardens is an oblong urban park located in a wide median plaza between the northbound and paired southbound alignments of St. Paul Street. The park begins on the north side of Lexington Street opposite the side wall of the Baltimore City Courthouse and extends north approximately five blocks to a point at Centre Street. A line of three narrow median strips between the paired southbound lanes, as well as a pair of triangular traffic islands at the south end of the park space between Lexington Street and Saratoga Street, are included within the boundaries of Preston Gardens, as they are landscaped remnants of the original green space. The park is bisected at Orleans Street by the ca. 1930 Orleans Street Viaduct, a brick and stone elevated roadway which splits at St. Paul Street to form Franklin and Mulberry Streets west of St. Paul Street. The viaduct's brick walls are connected directly to the retaining walls along the west side of Preston Gardens.

The northbound lanes of St. Paul Street are located at a considerably lower elevation than the southbound lanes, and the largest section of Preston Gardens (south of Orleans Street) is framed along the west end by a gently curved one-story Flemish-bond

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended X Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria: X A    B X C    D Considerations:    A    B    C    D    E    F    G

MHT Comments: PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1914-1935

Jim Salama  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Blum  
Reviewer, National Register Program

3/31/2010  
Date

4/5/10; 6/19/2012  
Date

brick and concrete retaining wall with stone trim. A stone balustrade wall and a narrow sidewalk allow limited pedestrian access along the east side of the southbound lanes of St. Paul Street above the park. From this sidewalk, four different stone staircases cascade down from the upper St. Paul sidewalk elevation into the park and the lower elevation. Each is faced with limestone and has stone balustrades and graceful curved steps. The southernmost staircase is outside the retaining wall and follows its curve with a single run. The second, third, and fourth staircases (moving northward) have elaborate curves and split runs, with upper and lower splits on the second and fourth staircases. The staircases and cross streets to the east are connected by a network of both straight and curved concrete sidewalks hemmed by low, narrow curbs with flat tops. The land in this sector has been graded to be mostly level with only gradual sloping. The park is planted with grass, numerous mature trees, and ornamental shrubbery. Near the south end of the park stands the ca. 1911 John Mifflin Hood Monument (B-4268), a bronze life-size figure atop a round marble pedestal and shaded by mature trees. This statue is not original to the park; it was moved to this location from Hopkins Place in 1963 due to redevelopment, and its current site was chosen due to its proximity to the Western Maryland Railroad's headquarters on St. Paul Place.

To the north of Orleans Street, Preston Gardens has different, more modern-looking landscaping, which appears to date from the 1930s. The overall design of walkways is less formal and considerably more asymmetrical, and the land is gently sloped rather than being graded flat as on the south side. Sidewalks have less dramatic curves and are concrete, bordered by thick rounded aggregate curbs. Pointed stone gateposts stand at the eastern termini of a few of the walkways. There is a wide, single-run staircase a short distance north of the viaduct. This staircase is concrete with iron handrails, and is framed by thick, rounded concrete-aggregate curb. The topography flattens considerably to the north of the stairs and has planted ornamental beds, shrubs, and small trees, but is less formal in appearance than the southern sector of the park.

The southbound median strips and the two traffic islands to the south of the main park sector are each planted with grass and ornamental flower gardens, but lack stairs, interior sidewalks, and other amenities of the larger sectors.

Preston Gardens was inspired by the suggestion of the Olmsted Brothers firm, which proposed widening St. Paul Street to prevent future traffic problems when they prepared a parks plan for Baltimore in 1904. After 1900, the genteel downtown residential neighborhood began to decline as wealthy residents moved to the new suburbs, and the area that is now St. Paul Place became a racially integrated neighborhood.

The creation of Preston Gardens and St. Paul Place began in 1914 as a pet project of then-Mayor James H. Preston. Preston was an advocate for city beautification throughout his two mayoral terms (1911-1919). Other improvement projects he oversaw or initiated included the restoration of Mount Vernon Place, the construction of the War Memorial across from City Hall on Gay Street, and the underground diversion of the Jones Falls.

An ordinance passed in 1914 authorized the city to condemn and acquire the buildings and lots that stood in the way of what would become Preston Gardens. Removing what he considered to be blighted buildings, Preston hoped future tax income from increased property values around the downtown park would defray the cost of the improvements. The use of loan money designated for harbor improvements and his persistent championing of the St. Paul widening despite its costs caused the project to be dubbed "Preston's Folly." The project eventually proved successful, as sale prices in the area doubled, and in some cases tripled, following the opening of the new park.

The city hired Thomas Hastings to design the park. His design reflected aspects of both Beaux-Arts and City Beautiful aesthetics. St. Paul Street was widened between Lexington and Hamilton Streets, and five blocks of row housing were

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria:    A    B    C    D    Considerations:    A    B    C    D    E    F    G

MHT Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

demolished to create St. Paul Place with a park space in the middle. Mayor Preston reportedly wanted the park to have a cruciform plan in honor of Cardinal Gibbons, but others prevailed and the park was designed as an oblong shape. The park, initially called Preston Terraces, was completed and dedicated in 1919. In its original form, the park had a small parking lot at its south end facing the courthouse, a landscaped island south of Saratoga Street, a long segment of parkland between Saratoga and Orleans Streets with a parallel landscaped median strip with a center sidewalk bordered by trees in the southbound lanes of St. Paul Street, and a wider, shorter landscaped park space north of Orleans Street. The large park sector had winding paths, four stone stairways, and lush plantings and trees.

Numerous changes have occurred to the park over the years. Ironically, though the park had its genesis as a traffic solution, ever increasing automobile traffic has resulted in the loss of considerable Preston Gardens park space to accommodate road expansions and traffic control measures. Construction of the elevated Orleans Street Viaduct across the park in ca. 1935 created a new gateway to the downtown, but effectively separated the greenspace areas to the north and south of Orleans Street. The separation is both visual and physical: the elevated roadway forms a solid one-story wall that prevents visual contact between the two main sectors, and original pedestrian pathways toward the Orleans Street crossing were blocked off without provision of a pedestrian tunnel or path linking both sides. To reach one side of the park from the other today, one must either descend to and cross over to the far side of northbound St. Paul Street to use a sidewalk through the northbound lane tunnel under the viaduct, then cross back to re-enter the park on the other side, or ascend to the southbound elevation and cross the fast-moving traffic from Mulberry onto the viaduct and exit the viaduct onto Franklin. Further widening of St. Paul Street concurrent with the viaduct construction consumed much of the original exterior park space, notably the medians on the southbound side, which are now reduced to narrow strips. To their credit, the designers did integrate the viaduct and the widened southbound St. Paul Street with consistent, curved brick retaining walls, which are of high quality and sympathetic to the formal staircases. Light Street was later extended through one of the original islands on the south end of the park between Saratoga Street and Lexington Street, creating the present triangular islands separated by a wide cut-through, and isolating the park space from the courthouse to the south. As previously mentioned, the John Mifflin Hood statue was relocated to the main section of the park in 1963. Of all the changes to the park, this was by far the most sympathetic. The neighborhood setting of the park has changed from predominantly residential to predominantly commercial, government, and institutional uses. Commercial redevelopment and Mercy Hospital's expansions have resulted in demolition of most of the remaining row house blocks around the park, although some have survived north of Orleans Street. High-rise buildings on the upper level of St. Paul Street now tower over the park.

Although Preston Gardens has seen numerous changes over time, many of which have made it less pedestrian-friendly and less visually cohesive, it does retain a number of key elements of Beaux-Arts and City Beautiful design. Its graceful, swirling staircases, curved walks and paths, lush landscaping, and use of the site's natural topography to enhance the visual drama of the space are all intact. The Orleans Street Viaduct, although it forms a barrier between park sectors, was carefully integrated into the existing park's visual style with connecting brick retaining walls, arched openings, and a formal, neoclassical appearance. Despite some neglect of the fountains and trees, Preston Gardens remains very much a green oasis of formal European landscaping within the urban grid, and a strong reminder of an era when it was created as a beautiful solution to increasing city traffic.

Preston Gardens was evaluated under the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Criteria A, B, and C using the guidelines set forth in the NRHP Bulletin How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation.

Preston Gardens was an important part of a larger program of improvements initiated by Mayor James Preston during his two terms as Baltimore mayor. Despite early skepticism, the project was ultimately successful as the gardens increased property

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW**

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria:    A    B    C    D Considerations:    A    B    C    D    E    F    G

MHT Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

B-2237

Preston Gardens

Page 4

values. It is therefore recommended eligible under Criterion A for its association with early twentieth century urban renewal efforts in Baltimore. Preston Gardens is not associated with the productive lives of persons significant in our past; therefore, it is not eligible for the NRHP under Criterion B. As a unique example of a small Beaux-Arts city park and a lesser-known result of the Olmsted Brothers firm's involvement with Baltimore park design, Preston Gardens is recommended eligible for the NRHP under Criterion C. Preston Gardens was not evaluated under Criterion D as part of this assessment, but due to probable major ground disturbance during its creation, it is unlikely to contain important subsurface information about history or prehistory.

Based on the evaluated Criteria, Preston Gardens is eligible for listing in the NRHP with a period of significance of 1919, corresponding with the date of its construction.

## Works Consulted:

J.W.O. "Only Processes of Time Can Aid Blighted Areas, Ex-Mayor Preston Says." The Baltimore Sun, June 26, 1936: 28.

The Baltimore Sun. "Jones Falls in New Bed." October 30, 1914: 14.

The Baltimore Sun. "May Vie on Memorial." February 11, 1919: 8.

The Baltimore Sun. "New Terrace Dedicated." May 16, 1919: S16.

The Baltimore Sun. "Preston's Folly." September 11, 1965: 10.

The Baltimore Sun. "Rome Has Her Tiber, Baltimore Her Jones Falls." December 10, 1911: L1.

The Baltimore Sun. "Terrace Property Values Up." March 5, 1920: 20.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW

Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

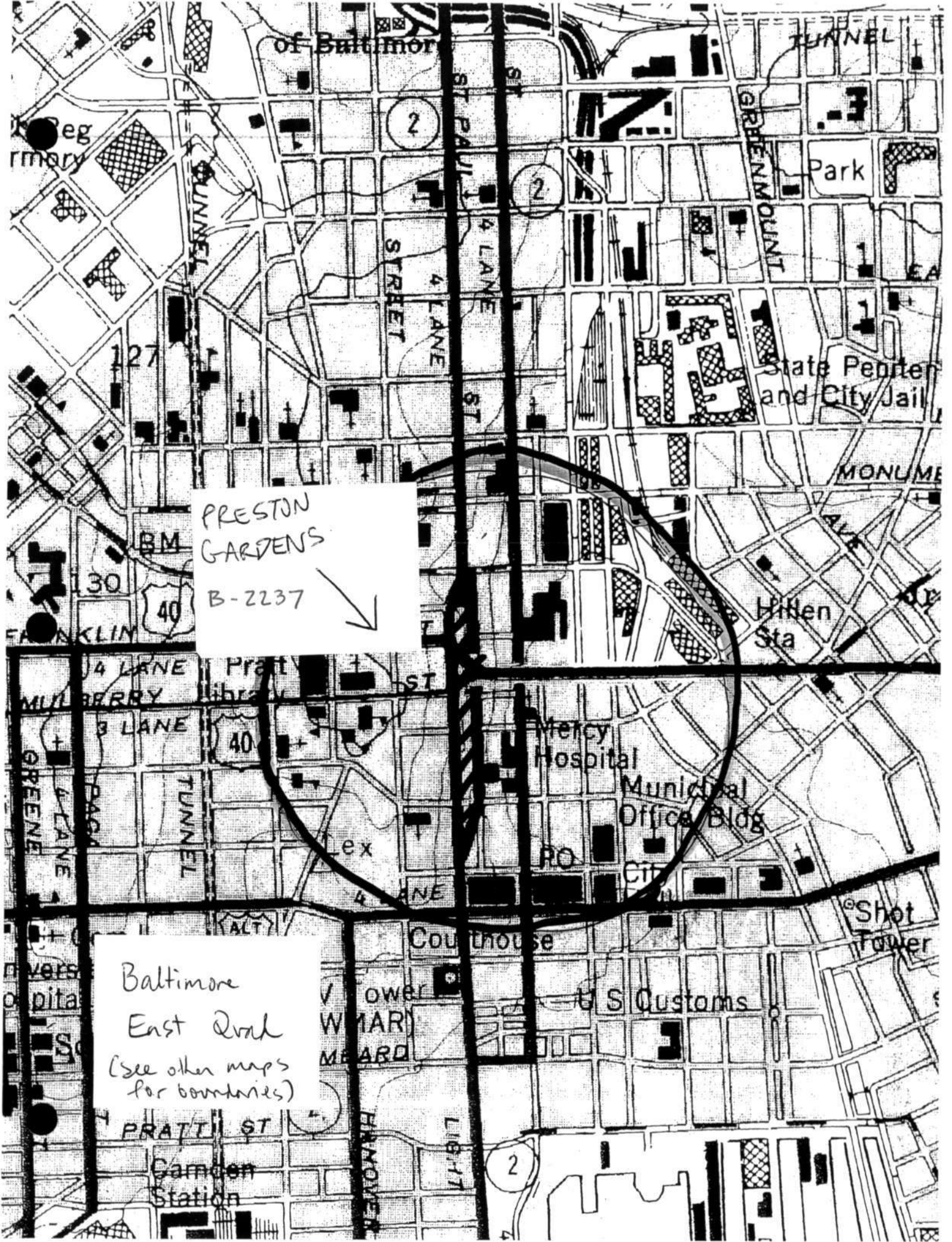
Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Criteria:       A       B       C       D    Considerations:       A       B       C       D       E       F       G

MHT Comments:

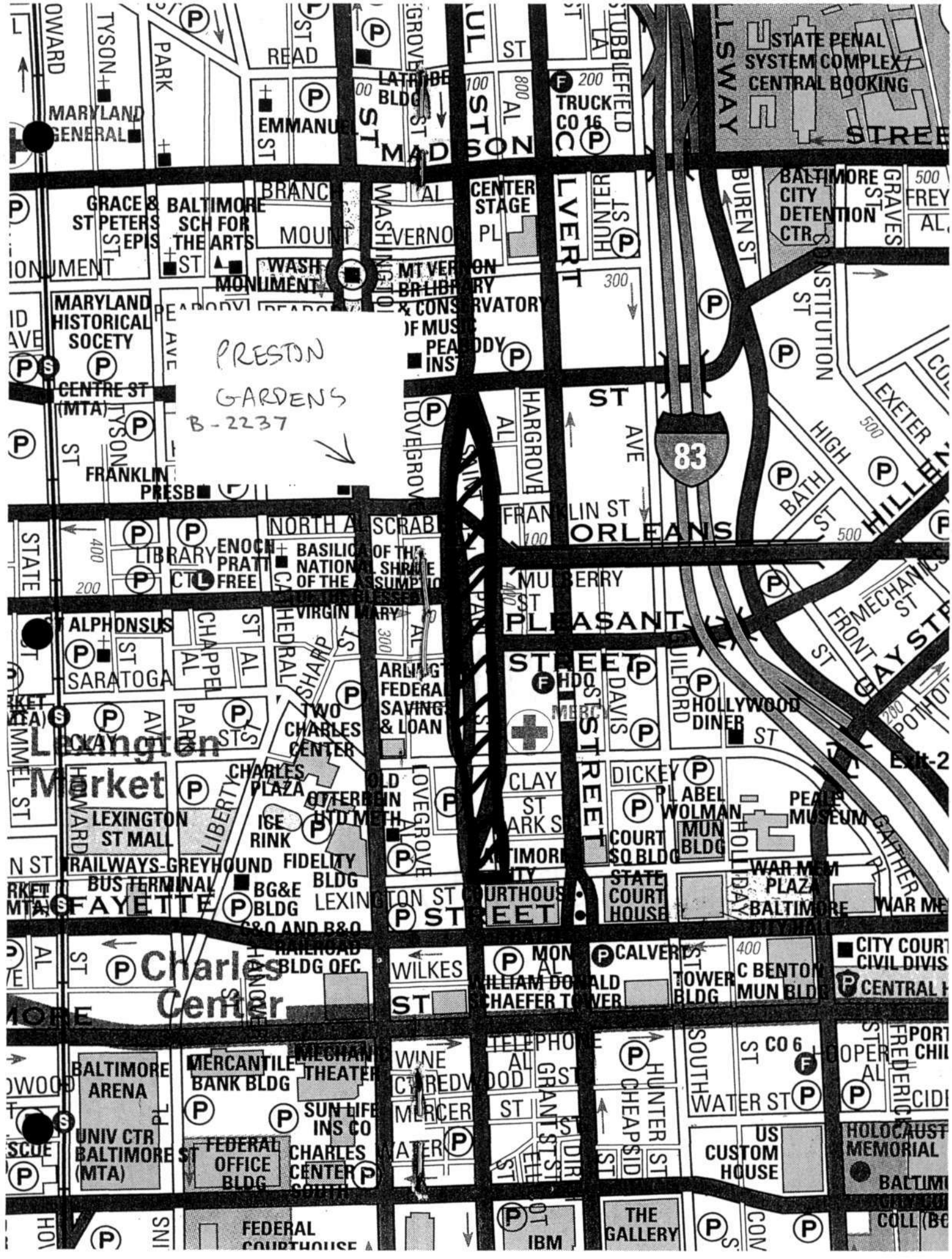
\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services\_\_\_\_\_  
Date\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





PRESTON  
GARDENS  
B-2237

Baltimore  
East End  
(see other maps  
for boundaries)



PRESTON  
GARDENS  
B-2237

Lexington  
Market

Charles  
Center



# PROGRESS AHEAD!



RESURFACING HIGHWAYS  
AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS  
A.D.C. 352 CONTRACT #18-01022  
COMPLETION DATE: FALL 2002  
FOR INFORMATION CALL: 410-386-6801



*Improving Baltimore for our Children*

Department of Transportation

State Drive West



B-2237

Preston Gardens

Baltimore City,  
Maryland

Renée Noveck

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View NE of Preston  
Gardens from  
St. Paul Street

#1 of 8

(c)2007 TG < NJO - #11 H > 008 © EN  
2076 012 N N N -3-04 AC-03 SA107 GR08 2679.0/180.0

1  
DIGITAL  
PA





B-2237

Preston Gardens  
Baltimore City,  
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View West of 1st  
Staircase from lower  
level of St. Paul St.

#2 of 8

(C) 2007 T6 < N10. #11 > 006 © EN  
2076 012 N N N+2-18 AC-03 SA107 BR06 7179-0-100-0



B-2237

Preston Gardens

Baltimore City,  
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View west of 2nd  
staircase, from lower  
level of St. Paul St.

#3 of 8

(C)2007 TS & NO. ###>003 @ EN  
2076 012 H H N N 11 80-03 5A10? 5R03 100 1.0 100.9





B-2237

Preston Gardens  
Baltimore City,  
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View west of 3rd  
staircase, from  
lower level of  
St. Paul Street

# 4 of 8

(C)2007 T6 C1J0-#11H-2B04 (S) EN  
2076 012 N N N4-10 HD-03 SA107 GR08 7429240-1 001 01

DIGITAL  
PA



B-2237

Preston Gardens

Baltimore City,

Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View looking south

from Orleans St.

overpass

#5 of 8

(C) 2007 T6 CNO, #H#>002 (C) EN  
2076 012 H N N+2-30 AC-03 SR107 GR00 04/07, 07/106, 0





B-2237

Preston Gardens

Baltimore City,  
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View looking SE  
into Gardens from  
upper level of St. Paul  
Street

#6 of 8

(C) 2007 T6 < NJO - #1111 > 001 (3) BH  
2026 012 H N N+2-37 HC-03 SH107 GREGG 26/29.0-100.0

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DIGITAL  
PA



B-2237

Preston Gardens  
Baltimore City,  
Maryland  
Renée Novak

MD SHPO

25 September 2007

View looking North  
at northern portion  
of Gardens above

E. Saratoga St. +  
St. Paul Place

# 7 of 8

(c)2002 TG <NO. #N11>010 © EN  
2026 012 N N N+3-63 60-85 5A1M7 6R00 11/20/09 11:00:00

DIGITAL  
PA





B-2237

Preston Gardens/  
John Mifflin Hood  
statue

Baltimore City,  
Maryland

Renee Novak

25 September 2007

MD SHPO

View West of the  
John Mifflin Hood  
Monument, from  
St. Paul Street

# 8 of 8

CE02007 T6 CNOJ - ## H > 007 @ EN  
2076 012 N N N 3 05 AC - 03 SA107 GR00 2076 012 100.0

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

B. 2237  
BK. 609  
MA61#0422373834

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Preston Terraces

AND/OR COMMON

Preston Gardens; Preston's Folly

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

200 to 700 Block St. Paul<sup>Place</sup> Street

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

—DISTRICT

☒ PUBLIC

—OCCUPIED

—AGRICULTURE

—MUSEUM

—BUILDING(S)

—PRIVATE

—UNOCCUPIED

—COMMERCIAL

☒ PARK

—STRUCTURE

—BOTH

—WORK IN PROGRESS

—EDUCATIONAL

—PRIVATE RESIDENCE

☒ SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

—ENTERTAINMENT

—RELIGIOUS

—OBJECT

—IN PROCESS

—YES: RESTRICTED

—GOVERNMENT

—SCIENTIFIC

—BEING CONSIDERED

☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED

—INDUSTRIAL

—TRANSPORTATION

—NO

—MILITARY

—OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mayor and City Council of Baltimore

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

VICINITY OF

Maryland 21202

STATE, zip code

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Records Office Room 601

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

Baltimore City Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland 21202

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

City of Baltimore Neighborhood Survey

DATE

1976

—FEDERAL —STATE —COUNTY ☒ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL &  
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION  
Room 900

CITY, TOWN

26 South Calvert St.  
Baltimore, Md. 21202

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

B-2237

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Preston Gardens stretch along the east side of St. Paul Street and the west side of St. Paul Place (formerly Courtland Street) between Lexington and Centre Streets, a distance of five blocks. The Gardens occupying a site with rugged topography: the extremities rise approximately fifteen feet above the center; the western edge of the park is at an elevation twenty feet above the eastern edge. They were designed to accomodate north/south vehicular and pedestrian traffic at the western, St. Paul Street edge, with a parkway arrangement of tree-lined sidewalk median. East-west traffic, across the steep drop, was accomodated with an elaborate system of three major stairways, and three vehicular roadways.

An unbroken, lozenge shaped section of park stretched from Saratoga to Franklin Street. Elaborate, curving stone stairways were set symmetrically in the park, in line with St. Elizabeth Alley, Pleasant Street, and Mulberry Street, in a flamboyant Beaux-Arts composition. To the west, the tree-lined sidewalk median stretched parallel to this from Saratoga Street to Scrabble Alley, and was broken only at Pleasant Street.

To the north, vehicular passage, was possible through the park at Franklin Street. A landscaped quadrilateral park extended north from Franklin to Centre Streets. To the south, Saratoga Street ran through the Gardens, and a quarter-circle shaped park was set south of Saratoga, with its arc to the Southwest. A roadway skirted the arc at Clay Street, and south of this, a quadrilateral parking lot was set east of a high wall. The lot stretched to Lexington Street, across from the Court House.

The lozenge shaped section of the park was the most elaborate. The central stairway was circular in plan, and was broken by terracing at the center with staircases at the perimeter. Flanking stairways were identical to each other, with four flights of stairs each, fanning out from central fountains and pools. This system of stairways was linked with symmetrically arranged meandering walkways at the lower level which provided and interior pedestrian circulation system. Staircases, rails and balusters were all of carved limestone. The sidewall of the Graden, which rose some fifteen feet at the eastern edge of St. Paul Street were of brick panels laid in Flemish bond, separated by rusticated limestone pilasters.

In 1935, the Orleans Street Viaduct was built through the Gardens. The ramps at the western end of the Viaduct took most of the ground between Franklin and Mulberry Street. The side walls and balustrades of the Viaduct were designed to match the brick and limestone styling of the Graden walls.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

B-2237

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW		
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 00-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

The development of the Preston Gardens was Baltimore's first attempt at municipally financed planning which included the large scale clearance of urban land. As early as 1904 the Olmsted report, The Development of Public Grounds for Greater Baltimore had been received by the Municipal Art Commission, and had led to the development of the Charles Street Boulevard by the City in 1909. Several events led to the final realization of Preston Gardens, which before its completion would be known by some as "Preston's Folly.

A portion of the 1904 report called for the adoption of a Civic Center Plan, in the best City Beautiful tradition. The plan called for the development of plazas and parks to link the City Hall, the Post Office, and the new Court House. (Wyatt and Nolting, completed 1899). The War Memorial Plaza stretching in front of City Hall would not begin until 1921. But the report focused attention on the possibilities of highlighting the marble Court House, a civic monument which was highly prized.

The area to the north of the Court House along Courtland and St. Paul Streets between Lexington and Centre, had, by 1904, lost most of its former elegance and was in a shabby state of disrepair. Courtland Street, a five block long lane, dead ended at either extremity and was narrow and difficult to maneuver due to a steep slope.

By 1918 when the city made its last major annexation of county, lands, the volume of traffic which city streets had to accomodate had multiplied tremendously. The northern growth of the city had precipitated the building of the Fallsway, and the extension of Calvert Street between North and 20th (through the newly acquired Polytechnic Institute property). But the daily demands of north-south traffic necessitated the further improvement of street conditions. The widening of St. Paul Street at this critical point was hit upon as a viable, if partial solution.

In 1914, under the administration of Major Preston, acquisition of property was begun. In 1917, the clearance of land begun despite vigorous protests from some quarters of the community. The Federal Regency, and Greek Revival Styled buildings had housed Baltimore's elite in the nineteenth century. Money for the project had been taken from funds earmarked for harbor improvements. Architect Thomas Hastings (1860-1929), was selected to prepare the plans. Hastings, and his former Baltimore-born partner, John M. Carrere (1858-1911), had been responsible for the design of some of the nation's



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Planning Assistants

(Bill Pencek)

ORGANIZATION

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL &  
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION  
Room 900

DATE

1976

STREET &amp; NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

26 South Calvert St.  
Baltimore, Md. 21202

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

In 1936, the Works Progress Administration re-landscaped Preston Gardens around the new system of roadways. The southern portions were bisected diagonally by a ramp from the new St. Paul Place; the parking lot was removed and planted over. The northern park was cut to accommodate an additional exit ramp from the Viaduct.

The existing Preston Gardens thus consists of the following, from north to south.

1. below Centre Street, at the split of St. Paul Street and Place, a small, triangular plot of ground, bounded on the south by the Viaduct exit ramp,
2. a large irregular plot of ground bounded on the south by the Viaduct bridge to Franklin Street. A WPA concrete stairway, of simple, utilitarian design, runs from east to west; side-walks are laid, wishbone-like in plan, leading to the terraced, middle level of the staircase from the north.
3. a triangular traffic island, bounded on the south by the Mulberry Street Bridge.
4. the lozenge-shaped, terraced section of the park, with original stairways and walkway plan intact. The Mulberry Street Bridge skirts the northernmost stairway and carries its curve eastward. Saratoga Street is the southern border. In 1963 because of Charles Center construction, the Hood Monument, which originally stood in Hopkins Place, was moved to this portion of Preston Gardens. Resting on a cylindrical granite base, the bronze statue was cast in 1911 by sculptor Richard E. Brooks. The monument is 17 feet high.
5. two triangular parks of equal size, set between Saratoga and Lexington Streets. The hypotenuse of each is formed by the diagonally set roadway running from St. Paul Place to St. Paul Street,
6. the tree-lined sidewalk median which remains west of the park in St. Paul Street. It runs from Mulberry to Saratoga Streets, and is bisected at Pleasant Street.



most choice commissions, including New York's Beaux-Arts Public Library (1895-1902). Plans were concurrently developed by Hastings for the renovation and re-landscaping of Mount Vernon Place (completed 1917).

On May 15, 1919, "Preston Terraces" was dedicated, five days before the end of Preston's term of office. The total area of the park was 3.1980 acres. In the same year the new City Plan Commission adopted its first Park Plan. In 1934, when work was begun on the Orleans Street Viaduct (see Orleans Street Viaduct Survey Street) the parking lots at the southern end of Preston Gardens were made into flower beds to compensate for the portions of the Gardens which were taken for the vehicular skyway. Since the WPA Renovation of the Gardens in 1936, they have served as one of Baltimore's most widely enjoyed amenities.

B-2237  
Preston Terraces (Preston Gardens, Preston's Folly)  
200 to 700 block St. Paul Place, Baltimore  
Baltimore City iMap image, 2006

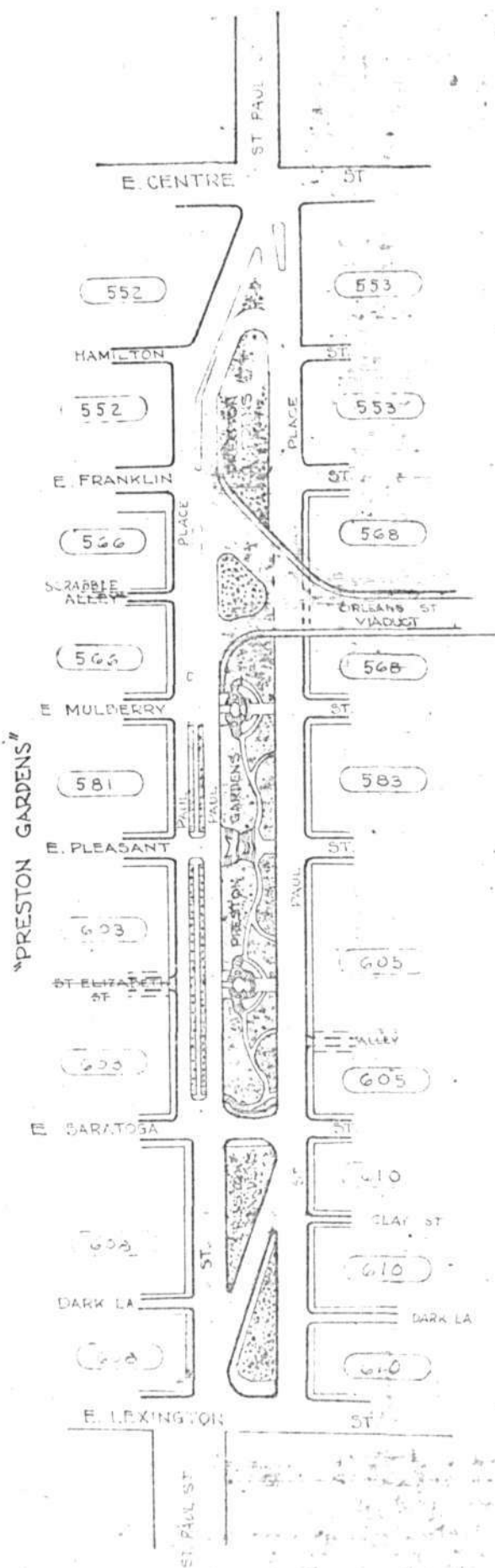
Preston Terraces (Preston Gardens, Preston's Folly)  
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Baltimore City iMap image, 2006

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Baltimore City iMap image, 2006



8-2237



**NOTICE**  
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 FOR UNDER ARTICLE 76B OF THE CITY CHARTER.  
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 SOURCES AND IS NOT AN AUTHENTIC SURVEY.

CITY OF BALTIMORE  
 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
 BUREAU OF PLANS & SURVEYS  
 PROPERTY LOCATION DIVISION  
 WARD 4 SECTION 1  
 BLOCK 609  
 SCALE 1" = 100'

THACED BY Moorehead  
 LETTERED BY J. J. J. J.  
 CHECKED BY W. M. J. J.  
 REVISION 1





B-2237





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